



Christmas Live 1st Person Narrative Sunday, December 20, 2020
Pastor Don Denyes

Simeon is a relatively obscure character in Scripture. Most of us, when we think about the people of the Christmas story, think of Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, the magi, the angels, and of course, Jesus. Perhaps that is because those are all the characters that come with our nativity sets. Or perhaps it is because we stop reading after the story of the shepherds in Luke 2. Either way, Simeon's testimony about Jesus when He was presented at the temple is one of the most moving aspects of the Christmas story.

It says that Simeon was "righteous and devout." For all of Israel's troubled history, for all of the sin and suffering, God had preserved a remnant among His people. These were people who remained faithful to God and earnestly believed in the promises He had made to them.

The way Luke describes it, Simeon was "waiting for the consolation of Israel." It can be very difficult for us to grasp the extent of this kind of waiting. It had been four hundred years since God last spoke to the people through the prophet Malachi. That's a longer period of time than the United States has existed. For that length of time, God continued to raise people up who waited for Israel to be delivered from their enemies and for God to re-assert His righteous rule over the nations.

Four hundred years is a long time. Not only does four hundred years represent several generations, but for Simeon, he himself had waited almost an entire lifetime for God to fulfill His promises and send the king that would save His people.

But perhaps most astonishingly, after all that waiting, Simeon likely did not get to see the decisive acts of salvation—Jesus's death and resurrection. Instead, he was so confident in the word of the Lord that came to him, that just knowing that the child had arrived was enough to satisfy him.

Read Luke 2:22-38

Discuss

- 1) What do you think life would be like without any hope?

- 2) What is the hope that the Bible promises for those who follow Jesus?

- 3) How does the Bible sustain us as we wait for our hope to be realized?

- 4) What are some things that tempt us to abandon our hope?

- 5) How can you have an intentional conversation about the hope of the gospel with someone over the Christmas holiday?